

PRESS RELEASE

Wednesday, 9th July 2025

Game Changer ‘Activation Day’ to take place at Sunday’s All-Ireland Football Semi-Final in Croke Park

An innovative programme of events spotlighting how male allyship and positive role modelling can help tackle the problem of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence is to take place as part of the All-Ireland Football Semi-Final and Junior Championship Final in Croke Park on Sunday (13.07.25).

The Activation Day will mark the eve of the launch of a new public awareness campaign for the **Game Changer** programme by the GAA, in partnership with Ruhama and White Ribbon Ireland, supported by the Ladies Gaelic Football Association (LGFA) and the Camogie Association.

The Game Changer programme aims to challenge the social and cultural norms and behaviours that contribute to domestic, sexual and gender-based violence. These norms and behaviours can range from catcalling, harassment and victim-blaming, to sharing of pornography, intimate image abuse which is often referred to as revenge porn, coercive control, sexual exploitation and violence.

The goal of Game Changer is to use the positive influence of Gaelic Games to promote alternative behaviours, attitudes and role models, and provide people with tools and knowledge to help them tackle domestic, sexual and gender-based violence.

Announcing the Game Changer Activation Day, **President of the GAA Jarlath Burns** said: “By dedicating one of the biggest days of our year to promote the Game Changer programme, we want everyone to know that Gaelic Games considers any form of domestic, sexual, and gender-based violence unacceptable. We are delighted to work with our partners White Ribbon Ireland, Ruhama and Cuan to raise awareness about the serious societal issue by activating our unique reach into communities across Ireland and beyond. I want to especially thank both the MacCumhaills GAA Club in Donegal and Bray Emmets in Wicklow for their leadership in participating in this awareness campaign – the second we have delivered under the Game Changer banner, alongside our sister Associations, LGFA and Camogie.”

Game Changer Activation Day Programme

A special programme of events on Sunday in Croke Park will raise awareness of Game Changer among fans and specially invited guests, Minister for Justice, Home Affairs and Migration Jim O’Callaghan; the Minister for Education and Youth Helen McEntee; and Ruhama Ambassador, former Tánaiste, Minister for Justice and MEP, Frances Fitzgerald. Support for the Game Changer programme was highlighted as a notable achievement in a progress report by the Department of Justice published last month on its ‘Zero Tolerance Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence’.

Welcoming the Game Changer Activation Day and new public awareness campaign, the **Minister for Justice Jim O’Callaghan** said: “I believe the Game Changer campaign is highly innovative in how it is harnessing the unparalleled reach and positive influence of Gaelic Games to engage people across communities, challenging harmful gender norms and promoting respectful behaviour.

“Men and boys must be part of the solution to domestic, sexual and gender-based abuse and violence - not as passive bystanders, but as active allies. Men need to speak up and confront inappropriate behaviour, model good behaviour to younger boys, and generally take responsibility. This campaign will provide them with some of the tools and knowledge to do just that, and I’m delighted to be able to support the work being done by Ruhama, the GAA, White Ribbon Ireland and Cuan on this.”

Minister for Education and Youth Helen McEntee said: “There is a role for everyone in tackling domestic, sexual and gender-based violence and I am delighted to see the GAA use their influence to raise awareness, promote positive behaviours and to provide everyone with the tools to tackle domestic violence.

“That the GAA are using their platform to promote the Game Changer programme is a testament to their commitment to challenging the actions and behaviours that may contribute to domestic, sexual and gender-based violence. With the GAA’s unparalleled influence, this will ensure that the message of zero tolerance for any form of violence is heard right across the country.

“I want to sincerely thank the GAA, Ruhama, White Ribbon Ireland and Cuan for their work on this vital campaign.”

Also among the special guests in attendance at the Activation Day will be Jason Poole, whose sister Jennifer was murdered in 2021 by her former partner. Jason will take part in a half-time pitch-side interview that will be transmitted to the anticipated full-capacity, 82,000 attendees on the stadium’s jumbo screens.

Donegal footballer Oisín Gallen, who will be playing in the Donegal versus Meath football semi-final on Sunday, features in the new public awareness campaign as a Game Changer ambassador, and a 30-second video ad that he features in will also be played on the jumbo screens.

Ends

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Notes to Editor

Media Spokespeople

The following spokespeople from the Game Changer project partners are available for media interview via Alice Public Relations on the contact details above:

- Colin Regan, GAA community and health manager.
- Barbara Condon, CEO of Ruhama.
- Sean Cooke, White Ribbon Ireland.
- Lisa Dolan, Game Changer Project Manager.

High-Res Photos

Download high-res photos [here](#). Note: Link expires in 3 days.

* If you have been affected by domestic, sexual or gender-based violence or need support, you can contact:

- Women's Aid 24-hour National Freephone Helpline – 1800 341 900
- Male Advice Line – 1800 816 588
- Dublin Rape Crisis Centre – 1800 778888
- Ruhama – 1800 02 02 02
- Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland – www.womensaidni.org

About Game Changer

Launched in November 2024, Game Changer is a three-year collaborative project between the GAA, supported by the Ladies Gaelic Football Association and Camogie Association, in partnership with Ruhama and White Ribbon Ireland, supported and funded by Cuan.

The new Game Changer public awareness campaign will go live on Monday next, 14th July, with adverts set to run on out-of-home, digital and social media channels targeting 18-35-year-old men in particular.

A new www.gamechanger.ie website will go live on Sunday, 13th July. For more information in the meantime, see <https://learning.gaa.ie/gamechanger>.

About the GAA

The GAA is Ireland's leading sporting and community association and works closely with its sister associations, the LGFA and Camogie, in all it does. Gaelic Games' unique contribution to community development, health promotion and social cohesion is recognised across Europe, with a recent independent recent social return on investment of the Irish Life GAA Healthy Clubs Programme alone highlighting a €50m p.a. contribution to the health and wellbeing of the nation. The GAA's role as a lead partner in Game Changer is an extension of that work and contribution to Irish society.

About Ruhama

Ruhama has been supporting women impacted by prostitution and human trafficking since 1989 and witnesses daily the profound trauma experienced by women who have been sexually exploited. Ruhama provides a diverse range of holistic supports including counselling and trauma therapy. Ruhama actively works on both national and international levels to influence policy and legislation to protect and support

women impacted by sexual exploitation and gender-based violence. Ruhama recently won Charity of the Year 2024 at the Charities Institute Ireland Charity Excellence Awards.

About White Ribbon Ireland

White Ribbon Ireland, managed by the Men's Development Network, encourages and mobilises men and boys to take action to end violence against women and girls and gender-based violence by actively participating in awareness-raising and capacity-building programmes. It works collaboratively with various stakeholders, including schools, workplaces and community groups, to foster a culture of respect, safety and equality.